INTERPRETATION OF CHRISTMAS

Dec. 19, 1956
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I will now try to recall what I said last night about Christmas, and how, perhaps, we should celebrate--or perhaps "celebrate" is not the right word--how we should try to remember what the meaning might be, of Christmas for us.

It is almost 11 o'clock, and perhaps this is a good time to talk about it. It is difficult to recall this when I am sitting alone. When we are in a group there is a certain stimulus which is very helpful.

I think I started out by saying that Christmas means really the birth of Christ, and that this happens every year, and that in itself must have a meaning, because every year it seems to be necessary to be reminded that Christ was born; and we want to remember that for a certain purpose, because it has a meaning for ourselves.

When I say Christ was born I mean by that a person by the name of Jesus Christ was born many years ago, and there are two words "Jesus" and "Christ". Although they are combined in one man, they have different meanings. By "Jesus" we understand the man, the personality; by "Christ" we understand his inner life. Both were born at the same time. One, Jesus, was the son of Mary and Joseph. Christ was immac-

ulately conceived, and it is difficult to understand this because we do not know who the father may have been.

What is this Christ in us? What is this Christ as a young child? What have we in ourselves that can be compared to Christ? And if there is something of that nature, what is the meaning? In the first place, it must have been a child; that is, it has to be young--it has to be born--presumably it has been conceived.

But there is a moment in our life when we discover that there is something that we consider differently from our ordinary life. At such a moment, we realize that although we do not know the parentage, we find ourselves with this idea, and also with the certainty that something in us exists--and that we become responsible for that existence. This, for us is the immaculate conception of our inner life, and for a long time we do not know who the father is. It is only by the realization that it is our child, that it is something we have to take care of, that we become responsible for; that, although we do not know exactly how to take care of it, that we have the obligation to take care of it as well as we can. And it is only in this trying to take care, trying to see what is necessary for the growth and further development, that we gradually realize where, perhaps, the father existed. It is ours, each person, and Christ in him at least potentially.

Perhaps we do not realize it; perhaps we do not know because there is no means for us to become aware of it until certain questions start to occur. And it were as though they appear out of a blue sky, and we find ourselves with questions about our inner life and our motivation for living. Then we become aware that we are alive--not only physically and with our feelings and intellect, but also with something that is more precious. Then with the birth of this idea we become as it were, for the time being, a mother of that child. From that moment on we try to prepare, as it were, the soil for the conditions, for the atmosphere, or the way in which we believe such a child should be educated by us. We have a responsibility because we are quite conscious, and we do not know what the requirements are of that child. Still it is the most precious something that we are trying to give attention to. And as a good mother we try to see and watch. We try to observe this, try to see where, at certain times, we, with our ordinary personality, interfere in the possible development of that which is precious. For that, then, we need help, and in trying to find this help we discover that the father of the child is His Holiness.

We now see that it is only possible with help from the outside to develop that what is inside, and for that our personality has to become an instrument which will not hinder

the force necessary for the further development of this child. It is necessary to become open to this--as it were, more porous so that such rays of a force of a higher nature can penetrate us, and that we are willing with our personality to devote that to the service of that what is within so that there can be a relationship established between the father and the child. And we as mother should watch and try to maintain the proper relationship, the proper distance, and the proper conditions.

This means that each year we have to remember that Christ is born, and that we have to remember that every time, every year, we have to take upon ourselves the responsibility of trying to help in the education of this being, and that each year we start the new year with such determination to try, not only to be aware, but to conform to the creation and the conditions which we only vaguely can pattern.

We have no other means than at first to try to listen to whatever we can feel--the first cry of this baby, and from that to try to not only adapt ourselves but to try to construct for it certain living quarters--to prepare for it a crib in whatever circumstances we happen to live, and to become responsible for the feeding. And in order to accomplish that, to sacrifice whatever may be necessary, particularly to sacrifice those things that will hinder development of that most

precious inner life, and the help that is endless, and we willing to submit to whatever we understand as his way. To try our best to keep this as pure and as beautiful as we can. When I use the words, "His Endlessness," I do not mean by that it is the sum absolute. We have no idea about sum absolute. Our range of vision and our intuition do not extend further than our own sum, and what we consider His Endlessness is probably of that order. It is something that is higher than we are, and to each we ascribe certain properties we do not have at the present time on earth. But it is only by opening ourselves to that we gradually become more aware and receive more understanding of that what is outside and that what has to penetrate us in order to make contact with our inner life. And for that it becomes--that is, this higher something--becomes for us our God. And with the establishment of the contact with the Christ child inside of us, which is our inner life, we can then truly say that God is within us. But it is necessary to have this constant contact between the outside force and the inside wish to grow.

The work that is necessary for that is the work of preparing and constantly being reminded of the task which is in front of us, which task is to remain open and at any time to be willing to eliminate obstacles, prejudices, habits, mannerisms, vanity, and all the various so called vices and

virtues of our ordinary personality. Only by using that material can the food be prepared for the little child to grow up, and then we can depend on its own life, that is, the life wish of the child itself to grow, to find his way, and to tell us in stronger and stronger terms and language and voice what is necessary for us, as personality, to give up, and really to yield to what is of more value.

I hope that we will remember this during these days of Christmas, this year, so that perhaps we can face the new year with a different kind of attitude, and a hope that we may not forget as often as we have done this last year that we have an obligation to fulfill, and that we are willing to try to fulfill.